

## *The Holy Spirit* **The Restorer**

Lesson #11 for June 10, 2006

Scriptures: Genesis 1, Jer. 17:9, John 15:13, Rom. 1:21, 5:10-19, 1 Cor. 13:4-7, Titus 1:15, 2 Pet. 1:2-8.

1. What do you believe will happen at the second coming? Will the saints who are resurrected and those who are translated receive new bodies? New brains? New minds? New characters? What will actually change at this point? What will not change? What will we take to heaven from here unchanged? Anything? (Revelation 22:11)
2. This lesson is about the process God is using to transform us into fit citizens for the kingdom of heaven. It will focus on the role of our will in the process of sanctification and/or salvation. **How much of our salvation is determined by our free choice?** Is salvation an all-or-nothing package? Will we continue to have full freedom of choice in the new earth?
3. We speak about the process of salvation. Salvation means healing. What is the relationship between this healing and the justification and sanctification that are often spoken of in theological circles?
4. Is there some sense in which we can prepare ourselves for heaven now? What is implied by Revelation 22:11: "Whoever is evil must go on doing evil, and whoever is filthy must go on being filthy; whoever is good must go on doing good, and whoever is holy must go on being holy." (GNB) How much does this proclamation include? We know it does not include the physical body. Could we have the same mind in a new brain? Or will we not have brains?
5. **What do you think of when you hear the expression "we were made in the image of God"?**
6. Think over what the word "love", from a Christian perspective, means to you personally. What are the best examples of love that you have experienced in your life? Would love be possible without complete freedom?
7. What are the main features or capacities which distinguish us from animals? What does it mean to have freedom of choice? What conditions must be met in order for us to have free choice and the ability to love? Why cannot love be forced?
8. What kind of risks did God run in giving free choice to potentially sinful human beings? What kind of risks did God run in giving free choice to Lucifer and his fellow angels? Was the creation of Lucifer a greater risk or was the creation of Adam and Eve a greater risk?
9. "The very essence of the gospel is restoration, and the Saviour would have us bid [825] the sick, the hopeless, and the afflicted take hold upon His strength." {DA 824.5} What do you think she was trying to say here? How does the Holy Spirit bring about a restoration of our originally intended state? Could we become like Adam and Eve?
10. One thing that the Bible makes very clear from the Old Testament through the New Testament is that all human beings are sinners. (Ecclesiastes 7:20; 1 Kings 8:46; 2 Chronicles 6:36; Romans 3:23) The level of our sin and wickedness is enormous! (Jeremiah 17:9) What needs to happen to restore us to a right relationship to God?
11. What happened to Adam and Eve at the fall? In what ways were they changed? Were

these “acquired” characteristics passed on to their children? Were they passed on by heredity via DNA are only by environment? How is a sinful nature passed on to our children?

12. **Do you feel like a guinea pig in the great controversy?** Are you willing to be used as a guinea pig if that will help God in his winning of the great controversy? Could we ever be of assistance to God in winning the great controversy? Or has God already won it? If God has already won the great controversy what is He still waiting for?
13. In the minds of some theologians there is a great debate over whether or not Jesus inherited our human nature before the fall of Adam and Eve or after the fall. This is referred to as prelapsarian or postlapsarian nature! Did Jesus in fact inherit a sinful nature? Any sinful tendencies?
14. Read Romans 5:10-19. What do you think Paul is trying to tell us in this contrast? **How many ways can you think of in which Jesus Christ was like the first Adam? How many ways can you see that they were different?**
15. Why did God decided to give us a second chance here on planet Earth? Why didn't God just destroy Adam and Eve and start over? God seems to have given the human race a second probation. Why doesn't He give individuals a second probation?
16. Read 2 Peter 1:2-8. In this context what does it mean to be “partakers of the divine nature”? How does this actually happen? Can we even comprehend the divine nature? Does God actually intend that we become like Him in some way or another *in this life*?
17. Is it possible to become like God in at least some ways “by beholding”? (GC 555) Is it possible for us to see a true and correct picture of God? Or is our picture of God always terribly distorted by our humanity and our sin? **How long do you think this process of transformation will go on? Will it continue only here on planet Earth? Will it continue during the millennium? Would it continue after the millennium?**
18. What would it be like to be around a human being here and now who had been transformed as far as possible into being a “partaker of the divine nature”?
19. “Those who are truly sanctified have a sense of their own weakness. Feeling their need, they will go for light and grace and strength to Jesus, in whom all fullness dwells, and who alone can supply their wants. Conscious of their own imperfections, they seek to become more like Christ, and to live in accordance with the principles of His holy law. This continual sense of inefficiency will lead to such entire dependence upon God, that His Spirit will be exemplified in them. The treasures of heaven will be opened to supply the wants of every hungering, thirsting soul. All of this character have the assurance of one day beholding the glory of that kingdom which as yet the imagination can only faintly grasp.  
**Those who have felt the sanctifying and transforming power of God must not fall into the dangerous error of thinking that they are sinless, that they have reached the highest state of perfection, and are beyond the reach of temptation. The standard the Christian is to keep before him is the purity and loveliness of Christ's character. Day by day he may be putting on new beauties, and reflecting to the world more and still more of the divine image.**”--Bible Echo, Feb. 21, 1898; RC 61.5,6; YRP 66.3
20. Read Romans 5:1. There are two different versions of this verse in the original Greek. If we have a right relationship with God do “we have peace” or should it read, “let us have peace”? The context seems to suggest the former.

21. **Could we ever become “perfect” in this life? What does “perfect” mean?** Are our lives accounted perfect only on the books of heaven? Or is there a real transformation in our lives here, if we are truly following the guidance of the Holy Spirit, that is reflected in the books of heaven? Would it eventually make us “perfect” here on this earth and that “perfection” would fit us for heaven?
22. We have the promise in Philippians 2:12,13 and 1 Peter 5:10 that God will work in us if we give Him the opportunity. How do you think this actually happens?
23. Do we ever reach the place where the transformation is under our control? Does the Holy Spirit always have to bring about this transformation or is it a natural effect of our relationship to God?
24. **“In the work of redemption there is no compulsion. No external force is employed. Under the influence of the Spirit of God, man is left free to choose whom he will serve. In the change that takes place when the soul surrenders to Christ, there is the highest sense of freedom. The expulsion of sin is the act of the soul itself. True, we have no power to free ourselves from Satan’s control; but when we desire to be set free from sin, and in our great need cry out for a power out of and above ourselves, the powers of the soul are imbued with the divine energy of the Holy Spirit, and they obey the dictates of the will in fulfilling the will of God.”** {DA 466.4}
25. **The Spirit will never lead an individual to be rigid. Remember that truth is always absolute but our perception of it is always relative. We can never say we have the truth unless a disposition to glorify Jesus and to follow Him is the dominant force in our lives.** Think of some classic examples in Scripture: when Rahab told her famous lie how do you think God rated her on the scale of moral development? What was her attitude toward the truth as she understood it? Didn't God honor the faith of the woman who—based on a pagan superstition—reached out to touch the hem of His garment? **The badge of a truly growing Christian should never be an answer but a question mark!**
26. **It is certainly not God's plan for us to carefully formulate the truth into a set of doctrines, place it in the museum, and get on with our legalism! Have we as a church become satisfied with our semi-rigid formulations of truth?** Have any people joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church because we laid on them a guilt trip? Could someone be just as honest in following his perceptions of guidance from the Holy Spirit while worshiping on Sunday as another person who is worshiping on the Sabbath?
27. **What are the major factors that lead us to be open and honest with the Holy Spirit?** Is it determined by culture? Age? Personality? Or can the Holy Spirit actually lead us to be more open? How would He do that? Have you ever met anyone who seemed to be so constrained by circumstances that it was impossible for them to be open? How does the Holy Spirit deal with such people? “Men and women of mature age are generally as insensible to new impressions as is the hardened rock; but youth is impressible, and a right character may then be easily formed.” {4T 574.3} [Ellen White first wrote these words in 1879 in a small pamphlet {PH100 64.2} when she was 52.]
28. **It is not the role of the Holy Spirit to somehow dump into our minds a set of propositions of truth. When you get a new idea which you can't immediately relate to any previous idea but you think it might have come from the Holy Spirit, how do you go about testing it?** And if you do come up with some new idea and you try to

present it to someone else, what anchor points can you relate it to? Remember that those who really try to be agnostic and try to claim they do not believe in any other form of God have, in fact, made a god of their own opinions!

29. **How often are our opinions molded more not by the evidence but by what we want the answer to be? How often do we make decisions with our emotional thumb on the scale? All reference points must be external so that each one of us has access to them directly. Remember that the Holy Spirit's goal is to help us develop qualities in our characters.** But this is not some mystical experience. To those who are really open and being guided by the Holy Spirit, He will always lead them to caring, loving actions. It is not always the intellectual giants who grasp every truth. Sometimes those with simpler minds can see through to the real truth while the intellectuals get hung up on small details.
30. It is impossible for us to fossilize truth. We must recognize that even the formulations of truth in Scripture, Old Testament and New Testament, were addressed to the people of a different time and a different culture. Even the writings of Ellen White were addressed to a culture and time different than ours.
31. **The Holy Spirit leads us almost always in terms of principles and not hard and fast rules. Principles have more to do with internal integrity and moral qualities. Rules by contrast have to do with the application of principles in a given situation in space and time.** When Moses saw the burning bush he was asked to take off his shoes. Was this a principal or a rule? What was the principle involved in that case? Wasn't it reverence? Has that principal changed? Not at all! Reverence has to do with the basic kind of person you are—you have reverence for God.
32. **When you feel an impression and you believe you're being guided by the Holy Spirit, how can you be certain it's not the devil? Remember also that our ultimate formulations and understandings of truth must be anchored in our understanding of God, not in institutions, especially earthly institutions or even other human beings. There's always a possibility that these could fail. Could even the Seventh-day Adventist Church be gone someday? Remember that Jesus survived Calvary by relying on the evidence of His Father's love heretofore given Him.**

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